Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Radio Service
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

LIBRARY RECEIVED AUG 1 1931 U. S. Department of Agriculture

Exhibit 2
1.9
Un3Hh

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT Tuesday, August 18, 1931.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Canning Corn." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Canning Fruits and Vegetables at Home."

The other day I talked with a man who sells canning equipment--jars and rubber bands and preserving kettles and so on. He told me that he had sold more of this equipment to home canners this summer than for many years past.

"Women around here are being extra thrifty this year," he said. "The art of home canning is having a big revival. Even women who have never done any canning before are putting up their peaches and pears and their beans and tomatoes at a great rate."

I hear the same story from all parts of the country. It is a fine thing that so much good food is being stored away ready for next winter. And all of us admire thrifty housekeepers who save strain on the family pocketbook by using the fresh fruits and vegetables while they are in season.

But---

Yes, there is a word of warning that belongs even in a story that starts out as happily as this. For food that is put up in the wrong way may cause serious illness. Canning is economy only when it is done by safe methods. Because many housewives, who lack the right equipment and an understanding of scientific canning methods, are putting up all kinds of foods this season, public health officials and home demonstration workers are much concerned for fear cases of food poisoning may be the result.

So once again today, I want to remind all home canners of the fundamentsl principles of preserving food in jars or cans. The object is to kill the germs causing spoilage. Heat kills these germs. They also find it hard to live in the presence of acids.

In canning fruits and acid vegetables like tomatoes, therefore, both the heat and the natural acids destroy the germs.

But, in canning non-acid foods, like beans and meats, we have to depend solely on heat. And, for safety, the heat must be kept well above the boiling point.

There are the principles. Now here is how to apply them in your canning.

Fruits and acid vegetables may be put up safely by processing in boiling water only 15 to 25 minutes. But meats and non-acid vegetables have to be processed in the steam pressure cooker. You know that only under pressure can you bring these foods above the boiling point. So you know why the specialists recommend that you can non-acid foods in the pressure cooker.

Right here I suspect that somebody is asking: "Why can't I safeguard meats and non-acid vegetables by adding some acid-vinegar, perhaps, or lemon juice, just before canning?" The answer to that is that there is no safe gauge to tell you how much acid you need as a protection. The amount of acid needed for safety, anyway, would entirely change the flavor of the food.

So it all comes to just this: If you can't use a steam pressure cooker, you and your family will be safer if you don't try to can the non-acid vegetables and the meats, including chicken, at home. But I'm sure most housekeeprs can have the use of a pressure cooker. If you can't buy one for your own use, why not form a club of neighbors and buy one together for cooperative use? It will be economy in the end, because it saves food spoilage and, worse, food poisoning.

Of course, you can go ahead and can your fruits and <u>acid</u> vegetables by the hot water-bath method, quite safely, without a pressure cooker. No danger to health in this case.

I can't go into all the details that your canning bulletin can give you about canning each different kind of food. But I will give you brief and simple directions about canning meats and non-acid vegetables in steps one, two and three.

1. Boil the food a few minutes in a kettle. This drives out the air, shrinks the food, and makes it pack more easily.

2. Fill the hot food in the containers.

3. Put the hot food immediately into the pressure cooker and process.

There are some questions about canning corn waiting to be answered today. Which varieties of corn are best for canning? When should they be gathered? What is meant by "Maine style" canned corn? How long should corn be processed? Is it necessary to use the steam pressure canner for corn? Is it all right to sweeten corn a little? What is the hot-pack method of canning?

Seven questions all at once. I'll have to take a good breath now before I answer all those.

The hot pack, so often mentioned, is not a <u>process</u>, but simply a <u>step</u> in filling the cans. I just talked about it when I was giving you the steps, one, two, three, in canning non-acid foods. The fruit or vegetable to be canned is cooked for a short time. It is then packed boiling hot into the jars or cans. This shortens the time required to heat the material at the center of the can to the very high temperatures required. Now, take the case

of corn, which we're talking about anyway. It is very difficult for the heat to penetrate material which packs as densely as corn does. So it is safer and surer to pack the corn in boiling hot.

Next, about the varieties of corn for canning. Garden varieties are best. Gather the corn about 17 to 25 days after silking. The exact time will depend on the variety and the season. Have everything ready for the work of canning so that after the corn is picked you can begin at once to shuck, silk and clean it. Try to get it into the cans or jars within two hours after it is brought from the garden.

Cut the corn from the cob <u>without</u> pre-cooking. Add half as much water as corn by weight. Of course, you have reliable scales with your canning and preserving equipment, for you will need them many times. Heat the cut corn and the water to the boiling point, add 1 teaspoon of salt to each quart, and fill boiling hot into the containers.

Do you enjoy a little sweetening in your corn? All right, say the specialists. Put it in along with the salt. Two teaspoons of sugar to each quart when you add the salt. Process the containers filled with boiling hot corn immediately at 15 pounds pressure(or 250 degrees Fahrenheit) for 80, 75, or 70 minutes, according to the size of the container you use. Quart glass jars will require eighty minutes in the canner; pint jars 75; and No. 2 tin cans, 70 minutes. This last is the size generally used for commercially canned corn, as you have probably noticed. Corn should never be canned in the large No. 3 cans, because of the difficulty of heat penetration. The choice of glass or tin containers is a matter of personal preference and convenience. If you use tin, however, use only C enamel cans for corn. Otherwise the corn will darken in color.

Have I answered all the questions? Oh, no—there was one about "Maine style" canned corn. Maine style corn is what I have just described. It is corn simply cut off the cob in whole kernels. Fresh corn is sometimes served in another way, with the centers of the kernels scored with a sharp knife and the grains then pressed from the hulls. But this style of cutting is not so good for home canned corn, since it results in a thick, pasty mass that is hard to heat and sterilize properly.

I hope you have a good pair of tongs or some other handy implement for lifting the hot cans out of the pressure cooker. Tin cans of the smaller size are plunged immediately into cold water, but glass jars should be completely sealed and cooled away from any draft. Then invert them to test the seal before you store them away. Of course, you are in the habit of dating and labeling all your canned products, so you can watch each lot and make sure that it is keeping.

Tomorrow, we'll talk about sunbaths for blond and brunette babies.